

72 E. Randolph Street, Chicago IL

Wednesday, October 7, 2015

My neighbors have turned against me because I did not want to sell, but I am a woman of war. I fight. I have never asked a anything for free, but I did ask for a chance to have an opportunity, and when Allende came he said that here they would build housing for workers, because here we all lived in camps: nannies, gardeners, workers, then Allende thought that we needed to stay close to our work because that allowed us to take care of our

Ana, San Luis Housing complex' last inhabitant in 2014.

"One early morning with my husband watching over me, ventured into the demolition site. We walked into an inner courtyard surrounded by two buildings in process of being demolished and one that was still inhabited. Once we were in the courtyard, all of

my perceptions about Cabrini Green changed. It was too early for the crews to have started the bulldozers parked around the site. It was quiet. I saw a child come out of the active building, cross a playground and head for the school located in the courtyard. I looked up and saw his mother watching him from her window ensuring his safe arrival to school. Being inside of the courtyard I could see what I had not been able to all the times I had driven past it. This was someone's concept of utopia.

Extracted from a letter written by  
Jennifer Greenburg in 2011.

Excerpt from the letter written in 2008 by the architect Miguel Lawner to Chilean newspaper El Mercurio, denying the information about the housing project of the Villa San Luis.

The Villa San Luis was built by the CORMU -Urban Improvement Corporation- during the government of the President Salvador Allende to meet the housing needs of homeless in the area. 1038 apartments in blocks of 4 or 5 stories were handed from April to March 1973. All beneficiary families comply with the requirements requested by the government.

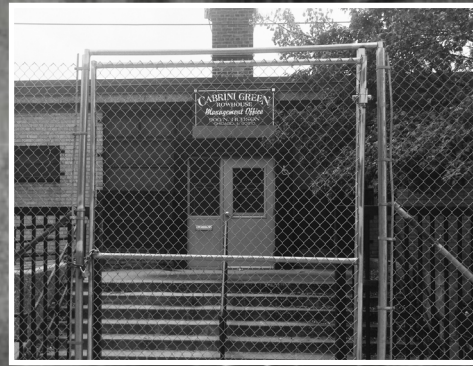
After the military coup, the families began to be evicted by the army without a good reason. About five thousand compatriots were deprived from one of the most essential human rights: the right of housing. Some were transferred to old institutional housing of the army, and others simply thrown into

pastures away from the city. The eviction ended in 1978. Only 100 families were able to avoid the military eviction and continued living in their apartments.

In 1997 the Army sold the land and homes of the Villa San Luis to a real state company, publicly announcing that the transaction amounted to the sum of 80 million dollars. Inexplicably, the Ministry of National Assets has not challenged the sale: the Army was not authorized to use the land for purpose other than institutional.

Consequently, the source of the current conflict resides in the unjustified and cruel dispossession of which a thousand of Chileans have been victims during the military dictatorship, and the complacency of the democratic governments, who allowed the Army to sell the land.

**Miguel Lawner, ex Executive Director, CORMU (1970-1973)**



Pruitt-Igoe (Architect: Minoru Yamasaki). First occupied 1954. Demolished March 16, 1972

## by TOMA

Utopia is a pristine and radical idea, an idealized idea. The term itself stands in direct opposition to realization, to material existence. The actual construction of a utopia is effectively its destruction.

It is a result of this interaction that those whom we know as utopian architects (from Piranesi to Ledoux, from Boullée to the 60s avant-garde groups) could not establish their oeuvre very far from its theoretical form.

However, actual cities are made of fragments of utopias, of partial truths. Within the urban framework, conflicts and consensus of individuals nest up, and many zeitgeists coincide. In their territories, the battle of thoughts and beliefs clash in combat: their physical manifestations and the shapes of their organizations witness and express this divergence, opposition, overlaying, juxtaposition and/or coexistence. In some cases, these exchanges evolve and find resolution in an organic manner, often accompanied by a tacit social agreement and by the grace of time. In other scenarios, the encounter is abrupt, violent, annihilating and traumatic.

Perhaps because the city accommodates this convergence of such a great number of ideas, a utopia

is not able to exist in it. The utopia is exclusionary, and ultimately it can either ignore what already exists or destroy it.

Let's not deceive ourselves: the utopian vision of Cabrini Green and racial inclusion in Chicago, or of Villa San Luis and social class mixture in Santiago have both experienced rather disappointing outcomes and the patterns of exclusion were far from reversed. Instead, these housing complexes consolidated as ghettos, crystallizing a grievous paradigm.

Then, we could say that only through their demolition, on their material disappearance from reality that these projects would finally afford the opportunity to consolidate as utopias. They could not find their place in this world nor fit into its reality. By their demolition, they can return their ideal state: that of the immaterial. The long agony of Villa San Luis and Cabrini Green is about to come to an end, to become again unobjectual: what was previously as an idea will later become as a memory. In this non-physical state, prior to birth and after death, the utopia cannot be demolished.

Lack of respect, though less aggressive than an outright insult, can take an equally wounding form. No insult is offered another person, but neither is recognition extended; he or she is not seen as a full human being whose presence matters. When a society treats the mass of people in this way, singling out only a few for recognition, it creates a scarcity of respect, as though there were not enough of this precious substance to go round. Like many famines, this scarcity is man-made: unlike food, respect cost nothing. Why then should it be in short supply?

Sennet, respect in a world of inequality, 2003

The map illustrates the Loop area in Chicago, highlighting various streets, landmarks, and proposed developments. Key locations labeled include Apple Store, Renaissance North, Orchard Park, New City Mixed-Use Development, British School of Chicago, North Town Village, Chicago Quasi, Skinner School, Target, Police Station, Old Town Village West, Park Community Church, River Village North, Domain Lofts, River Village South, River Village Point, Larrabee Retail, Old Town Village East, Division Citybourn RFP, Old Town Square, Shopping Center, Immaculate Conception St. Joseph School, Walter Payton College Prep High School, and various parks and schools. The map also shows the locations of several hotels and other commercial buildings. The map is titled 'Loop' and includes a scale bar and a north arrow.

Democracy and government as the practice of construction of new social realities – expressed by the Unidad Popular, the Chilean socialist government back in the early seventies- marks the apparition and transformation of professional print media, which give an account of the objectives and projects made by governmental institutions that held a radical program. Among these experiences of great importance are: the prefabrication as housing solution, the integration of design with processes of development focused on industrialization, and the reorganization of the

state apparatus based on nationalization and focused on urban and housing programs.

It could be said that, unlike other contexts where a climate of social oppression cornered the forces of transformation only in the space of utopia, in Chile, this transformation was put in practice, which led to the radicalization of the institutions and the institutionalization of the radical.

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OR COME TO 72 E. RANDOLPH STREET, CHICAGO IL

DID YOU KNOW THAT...architects hit into parties and then run home

Day #5: the brigade followed a trail to Cabrini Green. Among abandoned buildings, empty blocks and new buildings under construction, Milton Friedman didn't appear. Robert Taylor Homes, said a neighbor, could be a better place to continue the pursue. The brigade ends a new day, without further findings.

ABOUT  
SPECULATIVE  
TRIBUNE

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